United Nations S/PV.6143

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6143rd meeting

Monday, 15 June 2009, 6.05 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Ilkin	(Turkey)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Ebner
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. La Yifan
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Georgia

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1808 (2008), 1839 (2008) and 1866 (2009) (S/2009/254)

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09-37028 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 6.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Georgia

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1808 (2008), 1839 (2008) and 1866 (2009) (S/2009/254)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Georgia and Germany, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lomaia (Georgia), took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Matussek (Germany) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/310, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2009/254, containing the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1808 (2008), 1839 (2008) and 1866 (2009).

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to the photocopies of two letters dated 10 June 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia addressed to the President of the Security Council, which will be issued as documents S/2009/305 and S/2009/306, respectively.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The members of the Security Council will recall that, when we received the report of the Secretary-General in May, the Russian delegation expressed its willingness to work constructively with partners on agreeing to a substantive draft resolution of the Council on the future mandate of a United Nations presence in the region of the Abkhaz/Georgian border. We therefore stated that the corrected parameters for a temporary security regime and mission mandate proposed by the Secretary-General could be taken as the basis of a mandate for the new United Nations stabilization mission proposed in the report.

The mandate of the current United Nations presence in the region will expire in a few hours. Over the past two weeks, the Group of Friends has held intensive consultations for the purpose of agreeing to a draft resolution on this issue. The positions of Russia and the Republic of Abkhazia in support of maintaining the useful role of the United Nations observers in the Caucasus is well known.

In fact, the earlier mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) ceased to exist, owing to the Georgian aggression against South Ossetia in August last year and Georgia's subsequent secession from the Moscow Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces of 14 May 1994. There is no point in extending it since it is built on old realities. Guaranteeing Georgia's neighbours that there would be no attack from Georgia, and boosting support for the stability and security in that region, can only be done with a new security regime on the Georgian-Abkhaz border.

In that context, it is very obvious that, bearing in mind the new political and legal conditions, the majority of old terms and terminology used in the international documents cannot be applied. The international community must clearly understand all consequences of the wanton attack on peaceful Tskhinvali on 8 August 2008. The Saakashvili regime ended the territorial integrity of its country itself, and

two new States emerged on the world map — the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of South Ossetia.

However, we suggested that in the current realities such a draft Council resolution would have established a new security regime with politically incorrect provisions and old, contradictory terms. In fact, it was aimed at affirming the territorial integrity of Georgia and at denying the existence of Abkhazia as a State. Obviously, the Russian side could not agree to that.

During the work in the Group of Friends of Georgia, we gave our partners a compromise draft resolution with a number of concrete measures to ensure security and support for stability on the border of Georgia and Abkhazia, including impartial monitoring by UNOMIG. Our proposals were part of the latest recommendations of the Secretary-General on the matter. Thus, the Russian draft resolution could have become a realistic basis for continuing constructive international interaction on the basis of a United Nations presence in the region.

Based on the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, which was agreed within the Geneva discussions of the joint mechanisms to prevent and react to incidents, developing a new mission mandate would have allowed us to arrange the practical cooperation of all interested parties to strengthen security and to restore trust in this turbulent region in the Transcaucasia.

However, our Western partners were unfortunately not able to accept that approach. They tried to pursue a political chimera. How could anyone seriously expect that the new mission would be called an observer mission in Georgia, since it would operate in both Georgia and in Abkhazia? There was stubborn insistence on including a reference to resolution 1808 (2008), which was adopted in April 2008 even before the Georgian aggression that changed the political landscape in Transcaucasia.

On 14 June, a number of Council members, who refused to adopt Russia's pragmatic solution, said that they wanted a new technical extension of the old Mission mandate and once again wanted to insert a reference to the old resolution 1808 (2008). In that regard, it should be recalled that the Mission's mandate has been rolled over for periods of four months on two occasions — in October 2008 and February 2009. We are convinced that the time has come for appropriate reflection in international documents of the new military and political position of States in the region.

Nevertheless, once again demonstrating our constructive approach, the Russian delegation expressed its willingness for a new technical extension of the Mission for a month, in the first instance, to continue in-depth dialogue. That decision, however, was to be taken without advance political implications. However, our partners preferred poison to medicine. We can only regret that.

With regard to the draft resolution on the Council's table, the Russian delegation cannot support it and allow its adoption, for the reasons that we have indicated. It is difficult to say what the sponsors were thinking of in putting to the vote a draft resolution that is clearly unacceptable. They were not thinking of the interests of strengthening stability in Transcaucasia.

The main sponsors of Georgian aggression against South Ossetia have gone from the political scene, but their shadows still loom large among us. We really must get rid of that apparition. Political wisdom is not to be found in blind adherence to the vestiges of past thinking, but in showing restrained approaches, bearing in mind current realities. Thus, full responsibility for bringing to an end the United Nations presence in Transcaucasia lies with our partners.

For our part, the Russian Federation will continue to undertake efforts aimed at ensuring the steadfast security of the new young States in Transcaucasia and the socio-economic development of their peoples.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2009/310.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Japan, Mexico, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

Russian Federation

Abstaining:

China, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Uganda, Viet Nam

The President: The result of the voting is as follows: 10 votes in favour, 1 against and 4 abstaining.

The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council wishing to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): In resolution 1866 (2009), which we adopted and co-sponsored unanimously, we expressed our intention to decide on the future of the United Nations presence on the basis of the Secretary-General's report. That report, entitled "Report ... pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1808 (2008), 1839 (2008) and 1866 (2009)" (S/2009/254), received broad support within the Council when it was presented. On that basis, therefore, intensive talks and negotiations took place in the Group of Friends of Georgia.

Several draft resolutions were discussed. On Friday, the Group met for more than six hours. On Saturday, we met again. Many gestures were agreed with regard to the security regime. We were not far from an agreement. It is true that, throughout, Russia tried to use that process to get Council members to change their minds on Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. That is why all the Russian proposals included references to "the Republic of Abkhazia" and its borders — provocative terms obviously unacceptable to a majority of the Council members.

Strangely, Russia also refused any reference to a conflict and, what is of even greater concern, any reference to a political process. However, progress was made. We felt that those negotiations should be given every chance of success. That is why France, in a constructive spirit, together with Germany, Austria, Croatia, the United States, the United Kingdom and Turkey, yesterday put into blue the draft resolution (S/2009/310) that we have just voted on. That text proposed a technical rollover for the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) in order to give some oxygen to the negotiations.

The text was in line with the previous UNOMIG technical rollover resolutions, 1838 (2008) and 1866 (2009). Both those resolutions came into effect after the August conflict and after Russia recognized the separatist entities. And, as Council members will remember, Russia voted for both those resolutions, in unanimity with the Council. Russia even co-sponsored resolution 1866 (2009). One of the key elements that made it possible to adopt these resolutions and for them to be accepted by the host country, Georgia, was the reference to resolution 1808 (2008). That reference did not prevent Russia from voting for them.

Russia asked us to remove that reference in the current draft. That proposal was unacceptable to us and to a majority of the members of the Security Council for several reasons: first, because France, like the European Union, is fundamentally attached to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders; then, because nothing has happened since the vote on resolution 1866 (2009) in February that would justify the Council changing its position; and finally, because removing that reference would clearly have prejudged the outcome of future negotiations, rather than reorienting the current order in order to enable those negotiations to take place. Under those conditions, it is inexplicable to us that Russia has put an end to this Mission because of a reference to resolution 1808 (2008).

Russia assumed a heavy burden by imposing its veto on the draft text. The draft resolution would have been adopted by a wide majority without that veto, and with good reason. Russia has put an end to 15 years of the stabilizing presence of the United Nations in the area. The local population, which must be assured of security and external monitoring to prevent provocation and arbitrary acts, will be the first victim of that decision. The veto also leaves a situation on the ground that remains very fragile and unstable, with unresolved hatred, artificial barriers and no peace process underway. The Security Council cannot distance itself from that situation.

Once again, France deeply regrets the Russian veto. The most important thing now is peace and stability in the region. France calls on all parties with forces in the area to strictly respect the August and September 2008 agreements. Finally, we reiterate our unreserved support for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

Mr. La Yifan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council was unable to adopt a draft resolution on a technical rollover of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, to the deep regret of the Chinese delegation. In fact, the Council was only six hours

away from the deadline. We should have made further efforts. This is not the result we had hoped for.

Over the past two weeks, the Group of Friends undertook painstaking consultations on the extension of the United Nations mission and achieved some degree of agreement. The Chinese delegation consistently expected the Group of Friends to reach an agreement to avoid a forced vote. However and unfortunately, the consultations were locked in an impasse. We were unable to reach a consensus on a technical rollover.

Under those circumstances, the Chinese delegation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution. We urge the Group of Friends to assess the situation, show maximum flexibility and a constructive attitude, and conduct further consultations in order to arrive at a compromise plan as soon as possible.

China has always maintained that all States should abide by the United Nations Charter and the norms of international law. Our position on the principle of national sovereignty and territorial integrity has been consistent and clear. We have always maintained that safeguarding peace and stability in the South Caucasus and beyond is in the interests of all sides. We hope that the parties concerned will remain calm, engage in dialogue in good faith, adhere to peaceful means to solve their disputes and make joint efforts to advance the well-being of the countries and peoples of the region.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): The United States deeply regrets the outcome of today's vote on the draft resolution to extend the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). The draft resolution would have given the Council time to reach agreement on a new mandate for the United Nations presence on the basis of the Secretary-General's recommendations — recommendations that most Council members have supported. Extending the mandate would have allowed the United Nations to continue to carry out its role in monitoring the ceasefire, addressing security and humanitarian concerns on the ground and helping create conditions for the return of refugees and displaced persons.

We believe that a United Nations presence in Georgia is important. For that reason, the United States, along with other members of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General for Georgia, have tried over the past two weeks to engage in good faith negotiations. Regrettably, the Russian Federation could not agree to language in this technical rollover — language that reflects a well-balanced compromise that the Council had reached in its two previous resolutions on the issue. That language served to bridge the differing views among us on the situation in Georgia.

Despite our good-faith efforts, UNOMIG's mandate expires today. We will now need to consider measures to address a Georgia without a United Nations presence. We will continue to work closely with the leadership of the European Union monitoring mission and with the co-Chairs of the Geneva talks. In the meantime, it is the civilian population that suffers by facing a tenuous security environment without an international presence in Abkhazia, Georgia.

The United States would like to reaffirm once again in this Chamber its commitment to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. Today's vote demonstrates that the majority of Council members agree. The United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia has accomplished a great deal since its deployment in 1993. We thank the many members of the Mission over the years for their hard work. We also thank the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and Johan Verbeke, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for all their efforts to help resolve the conflict in Georgia.

Finally, we believe that the Council should remain seized of the matter and in this regard we look forward to working with other members of the Council in the future.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): Viet Nam consistently supports resolving conflicts and disputes by means of peaceful negotiations, in accordance with international law. As we desire a realistic solution based upon consideration of the legitimate interests of all of the parties concerned, the draft technical extension resolution, as contained in document S/2009/310, did not have the support of even the most concerned parties within the Group of Friends, and therefore did not have the consensus of the Council.

In that circumstance, Viet Nam abstained in order to leave options open for negotiations. I would like to reaffirm Viet Nam's support for the mission's continued operation under a mandate that reflects the new realities. We look forward to participating in and

contributing to the process of negotiations, on terms set forth in a revised mandate.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom regrets Russia's decision to block a new mandate for the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia. We continue to believe that a continuing United Nations presence in Georgia is a vital tool for diffusing tensions and maintaining security in Georgia and in the wider South Caucasus. We have made every possible effort to negotiate a new substantive draft resolution.

As we made clear during consultations on 27 May, we fully endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations, as set out in his report of 18 May (S/2009/254), for a new security regime and mandate. The Secretary-General's report provided us with a strong basis, building on previous Security Council resolutions. We would have preferred a stronger security regime, but in the spirit of compromise we and others were ready to adopt a mandate along those lines.

Along with the whole of the international community — apart from Russia, which is a party to this conflict, and one other State — the United Kingdom continues to recognize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. It is therefore regrettable that Russia, through its continued insistence on removing all references to Georgia's territorial integrity in the draft resolution, including previously agreed references to Security Council resolution 1808 (2008), should have sought to force the Security Council to change its agreed position on the territorial integrity of a Member State.

Russia itself voted for a whole series of Security Council resolutions upholding Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty, including as recently as February 2009. We regret that Russia refuses to stand by those resolutions, particularly as the situation on the ground has not materially changed since February.

With today's veto, Russia has effectively removed a key component of the international community's ability to promote stability and address the needs of vulnerable civilian populations living in the conflict area. We understand that the Abkhaz de facto authorities were keen to see the Mission maintained, making Russia the only party to this conflict that has sought to end the role of the United Nations in Georgia.

Despite Russia's decision, we call on all parties to the unresolved conflict in Georgia, including Russia, that are parties to that unresolved conflict to engage in dialogue and cooperation aimed at increasing stability and addressing the needs of civilians on both sides of the administrative borderline.

Furthermore, the United Kingdom would like to reiterate the importance of all parties to this conflict abiding by their existing commitments, as was made clear in resolution 1866 (2009), other resolutions, and the agreements of 12 August and 8 September 2008. We also would like the Council to remain seized of the matter.

Finally, I would like to conclude by paying tribute to the men and women who have served with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia since 1993 for their efforts, despite difficult circumstances, to promote peace and security.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): Japan supports a peaceful resolution of the issues of Abkhazia and South Ossetia based on the principle of the territorial integrity of Georgia. It is essential for all parties concerned to ensure peace and security in Georgia and its region. There is also an urgent need to improve the humanitarian conditions of internally displaced persons and refugees. To accomplish these tasks, we need to maintain a United Nations presence in the Abkhazia region and enhance the mandate of the United Nations Mission.

Japan views positively the recommendation made by the Secretary-General on the new mandate of the United Nations Mission. We support his recommendation as a good basis for a new mandate. It is therefore disappointing that no agreement has been reached within the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, despite intensive negotiations. What is most important for the international community is the maintenance of peace and security in Georgia and its region.

Our belief was that this goal could be achieved most effectively through a continuous United Nations presence. It is for this reason that Japan supported the draft resolution, which extended the mandate of the current Mission to allow further negotiations on the substantive draft resolution to be completed during the period of two weeks.

Japan also supports the reference to resolution 1808 (2008) and the commitment to the principles of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized border. After the event of August 2008, two resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Security Council in October 2008 and February 2009 with a reference to resolution 1808 (2008). There is no reason why we should drop it at this time.

Regrettably, the extension of the Mission was not adopted by the Council. I would like to encourage the international community, particularly those members of the Council concerned, to make further efforts to ensure peace and security in Georgia and its region and to reach an agreement as soon as possible. I also take this opportunity to express our thanks to the men and women who have been serving in the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia for their dedication and good work.

Mr. Ebner (Austria): Austria regrets that the Council was not able to agree today on the draft technical rollover resolution before us. We firmly believe that the United Nations Mission monitoring and verifying a security regime continues to be crucial for stability in the region and therefore is in everybody's interest. The Mission has played a key role in improving the situation of the internally displaced and refugee population in the area. We therefore attach great important to a continued United Nations presence.

We supported and continue to support the concept of a rollover resolution so as to give the Council the extra time necessary for negotiations. We affirm our commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

The last two technical rollover resolutions — resolutions 1839 (2008) and 1866 (2009), which enjoyed consensus on the Council — both made explicit reference to resolution 1808 (2008). Austria believes that there have been no major changes in the situation over the past three months that would justify the deletion of such a reference in the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): My delegation has been engaged over the past two weeks in negotiations within the framework of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General on Georgia in an effort to reach agreement on a substantive new resolution for the Mission there. We share the concerns of the Secretary-General that the overall fragility of the situation could further deteriorate as a result of the erosion of the ceasefire regime. On this basis, we have advocated for a resolution with an enhanced mandate for United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) in line with the proposal in paragraphs 65 and 66 of the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/254).

We believe that an agreement on a revised security regime applicable to all forces on the ground is crucial to the long-term stabilization of the country and a viable United Nations role in Georgia. In addition, we would have liked to see the creation of conditions conducive to the swift and safe return of all refugees and internally displaced persons.

However, the Group of Friends was not able to reach a compromise. There has been some progress on a number of issues regarding the possible new regime, but we felt that we needed more time to iron out the outstanding points. Taking into account the differing positions regarding the status issue, we have showed willingness to accommodate Russian concerns, but we were not ready to trade away the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Therefore, we, together with other sponsors, decided to submit a draft resolution that would extend the mandate for two weeks so as to allow us more time to finalize our discussions. We regret the Russian Federation's decision to veto this technical rollover resolution and bring to an end the United Nations operation in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone, especially as it may have adverse effects for both the people on the ground and the security situation in the region.

As the United Nations presence in Georgia draws to a close, we continue to urge the participants in the Geneva talks, co-chaired by the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to strengthen their discussions and to engage constructively with the aim of yielding concrete results. We also express our gratitude to all UNOMIG personnel who, since the establishment of the Mission in 1993, have performed their duties admirably in difficult conditions. In particular, we remember those who gave their lives while serving under the United Nations flag.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate that Croatia supports the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders and is aligned with the European Union foreign policy towards Georgia.

Mr. Mugoya (Uganda): From the outset, we have called for a unanimous decision of the Council on this important matter and have encouraged all parties concerned to resolve any differences in order to ensure that there is a United Nations presence on the ground. Uganda remains convinced that an international monitoring presence in the region is vital. The situation in the Mission's area of responsibility has remained fragile for some time. We have supported and still support the continued presence of a United Nations mission to consolidate and build upon the achievements in peace and security in the region.

We are disappointed by the apparent lack of progress in reaching a consensus on the draft resolution before us today, which in essence will lead to the eventual closure of the United Nations Mission. Uganda abstained in the voting because it was quite clear that, whether we voted for or against the draft resolution, the future of the United Nations Mission would still be in jeopardy — a scenario that we would not have wished for. We regret that the curtain will close on the United Nations Mission, but call on all the parties in the region to exercise restraint and engage in confidence-building measures as they seek a lasting solution to the conflict.

Finally, we commend the United Nations staff, who have served in the Mission since 1993, for their tireless efforts in promoting a more stable situation and their commitment in contributing to peace and security in the region.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica voted in favour of the draft resolution presented by the Group of Friends in order to allow more time for negotiation. We did so because, as I stated during the informal consultations, there is consensus among the members of the Council about the positive role that the United Nations has played in Georgia and a need for the presence of a United Nations force in the future, as recommended by the Secretary-General. Such a presence would provide guarantees to the parties to the conflict and contribute to creating the conditions for reconciliation and cohabitation in Georgia.

Unfortunately, these fundamental agreements were not sufficient to lead to a consensus making it possible to extend the mandate of the mission in Georgia. Costa Rica trusts that this disagreement will not be an obstacle to the international community maintaining its focus on Georgia and that it can prevent the consolidation of the situation in Abkhazia and Ossetia through measures that run counter to international law.

As I have stated on other occasions, Costa Rica takes as its guide the principles of international law, the application of which is the only guarantee for our own security. Our vote in favour of the draft resolution also expresses our absolute opposition to any efforts to ignore international law and our unconditional respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Georgia, as affirmed in all previous resolutions of the Security Council.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico voted in favour of the resolution that was submitted to the Council today because we believe that it is indispensable to maintain the presence of the United Nations mission in Georgia in order to preserve peace in the region and the security of its inhabitants, while bearing in mind the complexity of the overall situation.

Likewise, in previous consultations, we also expressed our support for the proposal contained in the Secretary-General's report to establish a new security regime, which would enable us to prevent outbreaks of violence and the use of force in the region. Given the lack of agreement within the Group of Friends of Georgia on the establishment of this new mandate, we today supported the extension of the current Mission, which, if it had been approved, would have enabled us to continue with negotiations to bring about an agreement acceptable to all parties and which would have benefited the civilian population affected by this conflict.

We regret that this technical extension of the mandate was not approved by the Council, and we continue to be available to participate in the forming of agreements that can help us achieve the objectives contained in the report of the Secretary-General, which have been supported by all members of the Council.

What is in play in Georgia are the fundamental principles of our Organization, such as the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States and respect for the rights of minorities. We will continue to

strive for dialogue and a peaceful solution to the conflict in the region.

Finally, we reiterate our call upon all the parties to not have recourse to force, in conformity with the 1994 Moscow Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces and the peace agreements of 12 August and 8 September 2008. We call for a solution to the conflict exclusively through peaceful means in the framework of the pertinent resolutions of the Council and in respect for international law.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): We followed closely the consultations that took place over the past few days in the Group of Friends of Georgia, and we regret that these consultations were not able to lead to a formula that took into consideration the positions of all parties. This prevented the Security Council from adopting this draft resolution.

We think that it is vital to have a peacekeeping mission in the region, but any activity on the part of the United Nations must have the agreement of all parties of the United Nations. This presence must be one of credibility and must help promote peace and security. Since there was no agreement among the parties concerned, my delegation abstained on the vote.

Despite all that, my delegation reaffirms here that we appreciate the role that has been played by the personnel and blue helmets of the United Nations in the region, and in the end, we would call on all parties concerned not to increase tensions and to focus all necessary efforts on maintaining peace and security in the region, whether or not there is a United Nations presence there.

Mr. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Burkina Faso voted in favour of the draft resolution submitted to us because we wanted, at this stage, for the United Nations to be able to maintain a presence in the region without the mission finding itself in legal limbo. The parties would then have had an opportunity to pursue negotiations on questions of substance. We regret that the Council was unable to approve this technical renewal of the mandate for a few extra weeks.

In spite of it all, my delegation would like to believe in the will of all parties to overcome their current differences, however deep-seated they may be, in order to allow the United Nations to maintain a presence in the region on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General.

In conclusion, we call on all parties to exercise restraint in order to give priority to the peaceful settlement of differences in the region.

The President: I will now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Turkey.

Turkey believes in the necessity of the United Nations presence in Georgia. It is for that reason that we awaited with great expectation a positive outcome to the negotiations within the Group of Friends. Unfortunately, the Group was unable to come to an understanding on the issue until last night. In order not to cause an abrupt termination of the United Nations presence, we agreed to co-sponsor a simple technical rollover that would have extended the present mandate by two more weeks. That could have provided additional time to conduct further consultations on the issue. Unfortunately, that was not possible. So we are where we are now.

This should not be seen as Turkey's giving up the efforts to provide a United Nations presence in Georgia. There is definitely a need for a safety valve. On the other hand, Turkey will continue to support the unity and territorial integrity of Georgia.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the men and women of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia for their professionalism and dedicated service since 1993.

I now resume my functions as the President of the Council.

I give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Georgia.

Mr. Lomaia (Georgia): The Government of Georgia deeply regrets the termination of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) due to the unconstructive position of the Russian Government. The Mission has long played an important role in bringing a level of security and stability to the Abkhazia region of Georgia. The fact that it is being terminated by virtue of a single country's opposition is of great concern to my Government and should weigh heavily on this institution.

It is important to keep in mind that Russia's rejection of this Mission is not an isolated act, but

rather a part of a larger strategy — one that began even before Russia's invasion last summer. It seems determined to roll back the international community's presence in Georgia. Just last month, Russia also vetoed the continuation of the mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I would like to express my gratitude to the men and women of UNOMIG for their hard work in protecting the human rights of the remaining population of the occupied region of Georgia. Their good work has consistently been undermined by Russian military forces and Moscow's proxy administration on the ground. On behalf of my Government, I would also like to thank those countries friends of Georgia, in the Council and beyond, that have worked hard to continue the Mission. We are grateful for their determined efforts and for their support of our sovereignty and territorial integrity. We will continue to work with them to ensure security throughout the country. The role of the European Union monitoring mission in that respect is very important.

The bottom line with respect to the termination of UNOMIG is this: There will be fewer opportunities to provide unbiased information on either the security situation or human rights violations. The termination of UNOMIG also means that it will be more difficult to witness or document any build-up or movement of Russian troops in the region. It also should be noted that the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/254) of 18 May 2009 clearly confirmed that Russia is in complete violation of resolution 1866 (2009). It is evident that Russia does not wish to have any witnesses who can confirm its disrespect and breach of international obligations. Through that non-constructive behaviour, Russia continues to breach the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008, as well as the diplomatic measures of 8 September 2008 moderated by the then French presidency of the European Union.

The facts are clear. Russia is not honouring the commitments it undertook under legally binding international agreements. Russia has gone further into self-imposed isolation on the fundamental issues of respecting other countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity, thus widening the gap between itself and the rest of the world.

Today, 400,000 men, women and children — the survivors of several waves of ethnic cleansing, those whose right to return to their homes has been stubbornly denied by Russia and its proxies — are looking to the international community with hope. They do not expect the international community to give up on its efforts to restore a measure of justice. What they expect are new and even more energetic efforts on the part of the whole international community that would eventually result in their dignified and secure return to their homes.

The President: The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make an additional statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I must draw attention to a procedural flaw in today's meeting, which of course has a serious political subtext and is one of the reasons that we are today seeing the end of the work of the United Nations Mission in the Abkhaz-Russian border region.

We have been very patient for many years now although, like today, it has been very difficult to be patient while hearing very non-objective words, to put it mildly, on the part of Georgia's representative. We have, however, listened patiently. Throughout these years, Abkhaz representatives have not been given an opportunity to inform Council members of their position during a conflict that has existed for many years in the Abkhaz Georgian region, which culminated in the tragic events of August 2008.

I could, of course, be very critical of the statement made by the Georgian representative, but I will not do so. There simply is not enough time. But I would agree on one thing, namely, that we have a genuinely positive view of the work of those who have worked in the United Nations Mission throughout the years. The Georgian representative is wrong, however, in saying that that work has been hindered by the Russian military. I recall that all reports of the Secretary-General give a positive assessment of cooperation between the United Nations Mission and peacekeepers of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which mainly include Russian military personnel, and of the contribution of our peacekeepers in support of stability in the region, which was violated by Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia.

I must also call attention to two or three references with which I did not agree. Statements by some of our colleagues have included erroneous interpretations of our position, which we must correct.

In particular, the Permanent Representative of France said that our proposed draft resolution on a possible future mission of the United Nations in the Abkhaz-Georgian border region included certain terms that would be politically difficult for Western colleagues to agree with. Let us say that is so. Many such terms were included in the draft put forward by our Western partners. But we are not discussing today why our efforts on a major resolution to establish a new United Nations mission in the Abkhaz conflict zone failed. We are talking about a draft technical rollover resolution that was introduced by the Group of Friends. Russia also proposed a draft for a possible extension, although in principle we believed that it was time for more substantive measures.

I shall now read from the short draft resolution that we proposed. Under the draft, which refers to all the relevant resolutions and takes into consideration the 18 May 2009 report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/254), the Security Council would "decide to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission under consideration in the report to a new deadline of 15 July". Thus, we were ready to include two additional weeks.

What is politically unacceptable in that? Is it Russia that has thrown a political spanner in our work to extend the United Nations Mission, or those who hastened to submit today's draft, with its politicized technical roll-over proposal, to the Council? I would urge us not to give ourselves a big headache over this.

I have one final comment. Many, or at least some of our colleagues referred to territorial integrity. That is a very important principle, but there is one interesting twist to it. I do not recall how many meetings of the Council have been held following the events of August 2008, but have those who claim to support territorial integrity condemned even once Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia? No one raised that issue in the statements that were made today. That omission is one of the reasons why, unfortunately, our work on developing a draft resolution that would have mandated new, useful functions to the United Nations in that region ended in failure. There has been a lack of objective analysis. I do not even call for a self-critical analysis, but merely for an objective analysis of what happened and how the outcome of those events should be viewed today.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.